

**REMARKS**

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Advisory Action dated July 31, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Applicants propose amending claim 1. Claims 1-20 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, “an upper chamber unit joinable to the lower chamber unit; an upper stage fixed to the upper chamber unit for securing a first substrate; a lower chamber unit for securing a second substrate; a first plurality of elastic members arranged between the upper stage and the upper chamber unit; and a second plurality of elastic members arranged between the lower stage and the lower chamber unit” as recited in claim 1. None of the cited references including Satoshi, Machida, Cram, Kubota, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

Machida teaches the springs 108 between the specimen holder supporting plate 104 and the specimen holder 102. The Examiner alleges that the springs 108 correspond to the plurality of elastic members of the present invention, the specimen holder supporting plate 104 corresponds to the lower chamber unit of the present invention, and the specimen holder 102 corresponds to the lower stage of the present invention. But, since the specimen holder plate 1-4 is connected to a pressure motor 104 through a pressure driving unit 109a and held by columns 110 for transferring the specimen holder 102, the specimen holder supporting plate 104 does not correspond to the lower chamber unit which is mounted to the base frame and is joinable to the upper chamber unit.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: August 22, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By



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